

CONGRESSWOMAN

Carolyn McCarthy

Working for Women - 107th Congress

As one of the 62 female members of the House of Representatives, Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy is in a unique position to fight for women's issues. As a participant in the Congressional Women's Caucus, Congresswoman McCarthy has taken action on a host of issues important to women on Long Island, such as breast cancer, healthcare, children, equality in the workplace, and domestic violence.

DEFEATING BREAST CANCER

Congresswoman McCarthy is a strong advocate for breast cancer prevention and treatment since the number of women diagnosed with breast cancer on Long Island is among the highest in the country. Furthermore, women on Long Island with breast cancer pay an average of 116% more for the five breast cancer drugs than drug companies' most favored customers, and 80% of women diagnosed with breast cancer are over the age of 55. She is working to ease the financial burden placed upon women diagnosed with this disease.

H.R. 758, the Breast Cancer Prescription Drug Fairness Act, is Congresswoman McCarthy's bill to reduce prescription drug prices for women diagnosed with breast cancer, along with seniors on Medicare.

→ Allows Medicare recipients and women diagnosed with breast cancer to buy drugs at the discounted rate that drug companies charge the federal government.

√ **H.R. 1723, the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act**, authorizes the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to make grants for the development and operation of research centers to study the relationship between environmental factors and the prevalence of breast cancer.

√ **H.R. 3989, the Better Screening Test for Women Act**, authorizes additional appropriations to the National Institutes of Health for research on the early detection of and the reduction of mortality rates attributed to breast cancer.

- ✓ **H.R. 536, the Breast Cancer Patient Protection Act**, requires health plans to provide coverage for a minimum hospital stay for mastectomies and lymph node dissections performed during breast cancer treatment.
- ✓ **H.R. 281, the Taxpayers' Cancer Research Funding Act**, adds to the Internal Revenue Code a checkoff box for a Breast and Prostate Cancer Research Fund.
- ✓ **H.R. 1354, the Assure Access to Mammography Act**, enhances reimbursement for, and expands capacity to mammography services under the Medicare program.
- ✓ **H.R. 3186, Paget's Cancer Awareness Act**, creates a study and an awareness program on Paget's Cancer, a rare form of breast cancer.
- ✓ **H.R. 2725, Breast Cancer Research Stamp Act**, reauthorizes the breast cancer research special postage stamp.
- ✓ **H.R. 3989, Better Screening Test for Women Act**, authorize additional appropriations to the National Institutes of Health for research on the early detection of and the reduction of mortality rates attributed to breast cancer.

PROTECTING WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Congresswoman McCarthy understands the concerns women have regarding their health, and she knows our children require special care. That is why she's working with her colleagues on a number of bills that directly address women's and children's healthcare needs.

H.R. 3014, the Diamond Blackfan Anemia Act, is Congresswoman McCarthy's legislation to increase research on a rare genetic bone marrow failure disorder which develops in infancy, with 10% being severely anemic at birth and 90% by the first twelve months .

- Encourages the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, in coordination with the Office of Rare Diseases, to examine the science of bone marrow deficiencies and do the necessary research.
- Asks NIH to aid the Registry of Diamond- Blackfan Anemia patients, which will help their understanding and discovery of the genetic links to cancers and other related illnesses.

- ✓ **H.R. 717, the DMD Care Act**, expands and intensifies research on various forms of muscular dystrophy. Became Public Law 107-84.
- ✓ **H.R. 600, the Family Opportunity Act**, provides families the opportunity to purchase Medicaid coverage for their disabled children.

- √ **H.R. 2887, the Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act**, directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop an annual list of approved drugs for which there is an approved or pending new drug application, or where additional safety studies are needed. Became Public Law 107-109.
- √ **H.R. 1111, Equity in Prescription Insurance and Contraceptive Coverage Act**, requires health plans to provide equitable coverage of prescription contraceptive drugs, devices and services.

REINFORCING WOMEN'S EQUALITY

Although women are supposed to have equal rights under the law, many argue that this isn't a given when it comes to the workplace. According to the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, women who work full-time earn only 76 cents for every dollar earned by a man. That gap is larger for women of color. Congresswoman McCarthy is a cosponsor of several pieces of legislation that address certain inequalities that continue to plague women.

- √ **H.J. Res. 40** is an amendment to the U.S. constitution that guarantees equal rights for men and women.
- √ **HR 781, the Paycheck Fairness Act**, amends the Equal Pay Act to revise and add more effective remedies for sex discrimination in workplace wages.
- √ **H.R. 2692, Employment Non-Discrimination Act**, prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.
- √ The different branches of the government attempt to shrink the wage gap different ways. One was the creation of the Equal Pay Initiative within the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau. The goal of this successful program is to address and eliminate the current wage gap between the sexes. Unfortunately, President Bush's budget cuts all funding for the Equal Pay Initiative. Congresswoman McCarthy joined 50 of her colleagues in writing President Bush to express dismay over this cut.

LOOKING OUT FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

Every generation faces different challenges, but today's woman fears her children's future. Not only do our children face the same threats that we did, but they must ready themselves for new ones. The war on terrorism has introduced countless new obstacles for our children to conquer, both now and in the future. Congresswoman McCarthy is working on legislation that addresses the many types of concerns that plague every mother.

- √ **H.R.71, Bureau of Justice Statistics on Child Abandonment Act**, establishes a task force within the Bureau of Justice Statistics to gather information about, study, and report to Congress incidents of abandoned infant children

H.R. 286, Childcare Construction and Renovation Act, is Congresswoman McCarthy's legislation to provide for the construction and renovation of childcare facilities

- ✓ establishes a \$10 million a year for FY02 - 06 competitive grant program to provide technical and financial assistance to child care providers for the renovation, construction, and purchase of child care facilities.
- ✓ authorizes the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to insure mortgages for: (1) new or rehabilitated child care and development facilities, including for fire-safety equipment loans (authorizes specified appropriations); and (2) the purchase or refinancing of existing child care facilities.
- ✓ provides for a study of the availability of child care facility secondary mortgage markets.

- ✓ **H.R. 251, Federal Employee Childcare**, ensures the safety of children placed in child care centers at federal facilities
- ✓ **H.R. 1650, Focus on Committed Childcare Staff Act**, establishes Child Care Provider Retention and Development Grant Program
- ✓ **H.R. 3106, the Protecting America's Children Against Terrorism Act**, directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to take certain steps to protect our children from terrorist attacks.
- ✓ **H.R. 2018, the Safe Havens Support Act**, authorizes States to use funds provided under the block grant program to States for temporary assistance for needy families to support infant safe haven programs.
- ✓ **H.R. 3524, Child Development and Family Employment Act**, provides access to early care and education so that families can work and children can receive quality custodial care.
- ✓ **H.R. 117, the National Improvement in Mathematics and Science Teaching Act**, improves the quality and scope of science and mathematics education.

FIGHTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is an unrelenting component of our society. Nearly one-third of American women report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives. Women account for 85 percent of the victims of domestic violence, but only half of these females report it, and of these, only 20 percent seek medical assistance. Congresswoman McCarthy regularly participates in the Stop Violence Against Women Weeks, an effort to bring national attention to the issue of domestic and sexual violence.

As a nurse, Congresswoman McCarthy understands the physical and psychological affect on the victims, and she is working in Congress to address methods of prevention and protection.

- ✓ **HR 2670, the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act**, promotes the economic security and safety of victims of domestic and sexual violence.
- ✓ **HR 4032, the Domestic Violence Screening and Treatment Act**, provides women with screening, assessment, treatment, and referral services through Medicaid, The Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, and the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant. If passed, this would dramatically increase the scale of intervention by urging every health care provider to screen women 18 and over for domestic violence.

PROTECTING OUR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Women's rights is not solely a domestic issue; it has international repercussions. While Congresswoman McCarthy does not want to force other countries to act in a fashion that may contradict religious or social beliefs, she is working hard to spread the knowledge of gender equality and opportunity throughout the international community.

- ✓ **HR 3330, Afghan Women and Children Relief Act**, authorizes the provision of educational and health care assistance to the women and children of Afghanistan, as well as those who are refugees in neighboring countries.
- ✓ **H.Con.Res. 344**, a resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day. It recognizes and honors the women who have fought and continue to struggle for gender equality and women's rights.
- ✓ **H.R. 1269, the Global Health Act**, improves global health by increasing assistance to developing nations with high levels of infectious disease and premature death, by improving children's and women's health and nutrition, by reducing unintended pregnancies, and by combating the spread of infectious diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS.

ENSURING REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

Congresswoman McCarthy supports a woman's right to choose, a concept decided by the Supreme Court during *Roe v. Wade* case. Unfortunately, not everyone is in agreement on this contentious issue. Congresswoman McCarthy, a member of the Pro-Choice Caucus, is working to maintain reproductive freedom through various legislative initiatives.

- ✓ **H.R. 1111, the Equity in Prescription Insurance and Contraceptive Coverage (EPICC) Act**, requires equitable coverage of prescription contraceptive drugs and devices, and contraceptive services under health plans.
- ✓ Joined her colleagues in expressing opposition to Bush's nomination of Judge Charles Pickering, Sr. to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Judge Pickering had a record of active opposition to women's rights and the *Roe v. Wade* decision. The nomination was rejected.

MISCELLANEOUS LEGISLATION

Congresswoman McCarthy is a cosponsor of many pieces of healthcare legislation. For more information on these bills, please refer to <http://thomas.loc.gov/>.

<i>Bill No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Description</i>
H.Con. Res. 66	Women in Congress	Authorizing the printing of a revised and updated version of the House document, "Women in Congress, 1917-1990."
H.RES.106	Women in Art	Sense of Congress that Artwork in the Capitol should represent contributions of women
H.R. 326	Ovarian Cancer Research and Information Amendments	Authorizes money for ovarian cancer research.
H.R. 602	Genetic Nondiscrimination in Health Insurance and Employment Act	Prohibits discrimination on the basis of genetic information with respect to health insurance.
H.R. 1143	Legal Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act	Gives States the option of covering legal immigrants under Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).
H.R. 3602	Certified Nurse Midwifery Medicare Services Act	Provides reimbursement for certified midwife services, and more equitable reimbursement rates for such services.
H.R. 3675	Improved Maternal and Children's Health Coverage Act	Improves coverage of needy children under the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).